



Alliance for Arts Education, Artists, Volunteers and Cultural Advocacy
www.ArtServeMichigan.org

ARTSERVE MICHIGAN
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR MICHIGAN MERIT CORE CURRICULUM

WHEREAS, State Superintendent Michael P. Flanagan, Michigan Department of Education and the Michigan Board of Education, have proposed the Michigan Merit Core Curriculum that would require a standardized curriculum for all students graduating from high school in Michigan;

WHEREAS, ArtServe Michigan has taken an active role in advocating for the passage of the Michigan Merit Core Curriculum which includes one credit of performing and/or visual arts as a requirement for high school graduation;

WHEREAS, ArtServe Michigan believes that any high school curriculum mandated by the state of Michigan should include the arts;

WHEREAS, the Michigan Merit Core Curriculum would allow all high school students to experience the arts and ultimately contribute to increased support for arts and culture in Michigan, and also a better understanding among the citizens of Michigan about the importance of the arts to economic development and student learning and achievement;

WHEREAS, ArtServe Michigan continues to work with state legislators and arts education organizations throughout the state to gain support for and passage of the proposed high school curriculum;

WHEREAS, Adoption of this Resolution by ArtServe Michigan's Board of Directors will publicly record ArtServe's support of the proposed high school graduation requirements, that include a requirement for at least one credit in the arts, and provides a balanced curriculum that nurtures and educates the whole child;

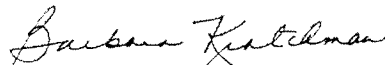
WHEREAS, this Resolution can be amended at any time to address revisions to the proposed high school graduation requirements and/or when the requirements are formally introduced as separate or joint bills by the State House and Senate;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that ArtServe Michigan's Board of Directors support the high school graduation requirements as currently proposed by the Michigan Department of Education and that this Resolution will be transmitted to the appropriate Michigan Board of Education Members, Michigan Department of Education Staff, State Legislators and Legislative Agencies at the proper time.

Adopted: January 23, 2006



Karen Mulvahill, Chair



Barbara Kratchman, President

ArtServe Michigan Board of Directors

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Bruce Ashley, Lansing
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February 1, 2006

House Education Committee
PO Box 30014
Lansing 48909

Dear House Education Committee:

We write to you as a coalition of ten professional statewide arts education associations and ArtServe Michigan representing 7,000 teachers working every day to provide every student, at every level, access to a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of instruction in the arts, in school, taught by qualified teachers.

We applaud the efforts of the Michigan Legislature to bring our state into the forefront of educational reform and we support the development of a state curriculum that specifies threshold content, scope, and sequence to prepare Michigan pre-K-12 students not only for college and the work force, but also for meaningful lives as broadly educated citizens and life-long learners.

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act acknowledges the arts as a core subject, as important to education as English, mathematics, history, civics and government, geography, science, and foreign languages. New Michigan curriculum guidelines should reflect this enlightened perspective. Consequently, we advocate dance, music, theatre, and visual art as required components of pre-K-8 school instruction and call for at least two Carnegie units in the fine arts as a Michigan high school graduation requirement.

The Consortium of National Arts Education Associations notes "all peoples, everywhere, have an abiding need for meaning—to connect time and space, experience and event, body and spirit, intellect and emotion. People create art to make these connections, to express the otherwise inexpressible." We agree with the Consortium that "all students deserve access to the rich education and understanding that the arts provide, regardless of their background, talents, or disabilities. In an increasingly technological environment overloaded with sensory data, the ability to perceive, interpret, understand, and evaluate such stimuli is critical. The arts help all students to develop multiple capabilities for understanding and deciphering an image- and symbol-laden world. Thus, the arts should be an integral part of a program of general education for all students."

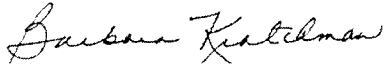
Thirty-six states and the District of Columbia have established a fine arts (visual and performing arts) requirement for high school graduation. Two other states have broader requirements that include the fine arts. Only Michigan and eleven other states (Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) do not require achievement in the arts at the high school level.

We encourage the Michigan Legislature to continue its efforts to improve and bring consistency to high school curricular requirements. Additionally, we call for a statewide commitment to providing the

conditions necessary to achieve the Michigan Arts Education Content Standards and Benchmarks by establishing a fine arts high school graduation requirement.

Our coalition is prepared to provide any additional information or testimony necessary to support this initiative. Please call on us if we can contribute to your deliberations.

On behalf of the coalition,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Kratchman".

Barbara Kratchman
President

Members of the Coalition:

ArtServe Michigan
Digital Arts Film and Television
Michigan Art Education Association
Michigan Dance Council
Michigan Interscholastic Forensic Association
Michigan Music Educators Association
Michigan Opera Theatre
Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association
Michigan School Vocal Music Association
Theatre Alliance of Michigan
VSA arts of Michigan